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GOOD NEWS FROM CANADA.

A PARLIAMENTARY paper has recently been issued by the Colonial Office which is of the utmost value to all persons interested in the emigration question. The form in which it is published, however, renders it liable to be overlooked by many who would otherwise peruse its contents with great eagerness. It will, therefore, be of some service to point out the leading features of its contents. The paper consists for the most part of a Report from Mr J. H. Pope, the Minister of Agriculture in Canada, drawn up at the request of Lord Kimberley, our Colonial Secretary, who was anxious for information principally on the following heads: classes of labourers whose labour was most in demand in Canada; numbers for whom employment could be found; the probable wages they would earn; what assistance or facilities would be provided to pass emigrants to the districts where their labour was in demand; together with 'any additional particulars and observations which a knowledge of local circumstances may suggest as likely to be useful.'

Mr Pope's replies to these queries are most exhaustive; and we will proceed to summarise the most important and interesting of them.

With regard to the classes of labourers whose labour is most in demand, Mr Pope reports that the agricultural is the most predominant, but that there is a very large demand for common, able-bodied labourers, arising from the numerous and extensive public works and buildings everywhere in progress in the Dominion, and that this demand will be largely increased by other public works projected, notably the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the enlargements of the Canadian canal system. There is a large demand for female domestic servants, both in town and country. Children of either sex, respectably vouched for, and watched over upon their arrival by the parties who bring them out, may be absorbed in very considerable numbers. The getting out of timber from the forests, and its manufacture, form a leading industry in the country, but not one to be

much relied on for newly arrived immigrants, the various descriptions of labour which it requires being best performed by persons who have had special training there. The industries, however, which have immediate sympathy with it make a large demand for labour. The fisheries, both on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, which are of almost unlimited extent, afford another field for employment. Mr Pope further reports that the mining resources of Canada are most extensive, and in their present state of development call for a considerable amount of labour, and will very shortly require much more.

The only classes whom Mr Pope would deter from emigrating, unless upon recommendations of private friends, and with a view to places specially available, are professional or literary men, clerks, and shopmen. There is already an over-supply of applicants for these callings; and unknown or unfriended immigrants seeking employment in them would encounter painful disappointment. The number of persons who arrived in Canada in 1871, and announced their intention of settling in the country, was 27,773. About an equal number in addition landed there, among whom there was no means of distinguishing those who intended to settle from those who were simply passing through to the Western States. These arrivals were not, however, sufficient to satisfy one-third of the labour demands of the country. Mr Pope says: 'It is a fact that more than treble the number of the ordinary yearly arrivals of emigrants could be absorbed without making any glut in the labour-market.' The average wages paid to agricultural and other labourers are from twenty-four to thirty pounds a year with board, and from fifty to sixty pounds a year without board. The most common mode of engaging agricultural labourers is, however, with board. Skilled farm-hands get from thirty to forty pounds a year with board; common labourers from five shillings to six shillings and threepence a day. The wages of mechanics and skilled artisans vary, according to circumstances, from six to sixteen shillings a day. Female servants get from sixteen

to twenty-one shillings a month with board. Very common rates are from twenty-four to thirty-two shillings a month. Boys in situations get from sixteen to forty shillings a month, with board, according to age and capacity. In connection with the rate of wages, it may be stated that food is cheap and plentiful in Canada. The following are average prices: four-pound loaf of white bread, fivepence to sixpence; salt-butter, fivepence-halfpenny to sixpence-halfpenny per pound; meat, threepence-halfpenny, fivepence, to sixpence per pound; potatoes, one shilling to two shillings a bushel; tea, two shillings to two shillings and sixpence per pound; eggs, sixpence to ninepence a dozen; milk, twopence-halfpenny to threepence a quart; beer, twopence to fivepence a quart; tobacco, one shilling to two shillings a pound; and other articles in proportion. The Report further tells us that there are many thousands of persons throughout the Dominion who came into it as labourers, without any means, in fact almost in a state of pauperism, and tenant-farmers with very little means, who have attained to a state of comparative independence, being possessors of their own farms, and having laid by sufficient means for their declining years, while they have educated their children, and settled them in conditions of ease and plenty. 'In fact,' writes Mr Pope, the inducements to immigrate to Canada are not simply good wages and good living among kindred people, under the same flag, in a naturally rich country, possessing a pleasant and healthy climate, but the confident prospect that the poorest may have of becoming a possessor of the soil, earning competence for himself, and comfortably settling his children.'

The Canadian government, it appears, affords every facility to immigrants in the way of providing dépôts and subsistence on their first arrival, and of sending them up the country. There are dépôts or stations for the reception of immigrants at Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, and Hamilton; and there are others now being built at London and Winnipeg. Agents are established at each of these stations, whose duty it is to afford to immigrants all possible advice and assistance, to give them information of routes, to direct them to localities where their labour is in demand, and to protect them from imposition, to which it is found they are liable. The stations are arranged in such manner as to afford them every accommodation in the way of meals, sleeping, and medical attendance, together with proper places for stowing luggage.

With regard to the climate of Canada, Mr Pope's remarks are equally satisfactory. It has been more misconceived than any other fact pertaining to the country. Very exaggerated impressions prevail respecting the rigour of Canadian winters. It is true that these are very decided in their character, and the snow in many parts covers the ground to a depth of two or three feet; but there are advantages in this. The snow is dry, and packs under foot, making the best roads, and forming a warm covering for the earth, producing, moreover, an effect upon the soil, which greatly facilitates the operations of the farmer in the spring. The dry, winter atmosphere is bracing and pleasant. The summers are also of a decided character, being in the main warm and bright. Fruit and vegetables

which cannot be ripened in the open air in England, ripen in Canada to perfection.

A pleasant picture is drawn by Mr Pope of the recently created province of Manitoba, in the northwest territory. It contains about nine million acres of land. The soil, which is mostly prairie, and covered with grass, is a deep alluvial deposit of unsurpassed richness. It produces bountiful crops of cereals, grasses, roots, and vegetables. So rich and inexhaustible is the soil, that wheat has been cropped off the same place for forty years without manure, and without shewing signs of exhaustion. It is especially a wheat-growing soil, and is believed to contain the most favourable conditions for the growth of this grain on that continent. Pumpkins, potatoes, and roots of all sorts grow to perfection; strawberries, currants (red and black), raspberries, plums, cherries, blueberries, whortleberries, and cranberries grow wild, and in abundance. The flax is very luxuriant; and the wild grasses of the country, which are very nutritious, are particularly favourable for stock-raising of all sorts. Winnipeg, the capital of Manitoba, has not, at present, much more than the dimensions of a large village; but it is already beginning to receive an immigration, as well from the older provinces of the Dominion as from the United States and Europe.

The Minister of Agriculture concludes his glowing Report to Lord Kimberley with the following sentence: 'It is certain that these remarkable conditions will be availed of by immigrants as soon as facilities are opened; and the construction of the works necessary for that purpose will afford profitable employment, with the prospect of comfortable settlement beyond, for many thousands of the labouring population of the United Kingdom. It is almost impossible to conceive the amount of wealth and population that will, in the immediate future, gather in that vast region; and it can scarcely be doubted that the question of its development constitutes one of the very greatest interests of the empire.'

A WOMAN'S VENGEANCE.

CHAPTER XXXI.—AT THE MASQUERADE.

ADAIR's attachment to Arthur Tyndall had needed no incentive, but the words that his friend had spoken upon his sick-bed to him and to Blanche had given him good cause for gratitude. Since Mrs Ralph Tyndall had not gainsaid them at the time, nor alluded to them afterwards, he had reason for supposing that his attentions to her daughter would be no longer objected to. And indeed, so strong a term would scarcely at any time have been applied to that excellent lady's opposition to the young people's wishes. It was Jack's own modesty that had been the chief obstacle in the matter. He was really getting on in that profession of which the degrees of comparison are said to be, 'Hard to get on, harder to get honour, hardest to get honest'; and had he taken courage to set forth his position and prospects to his dear one's mamma, they would probably have by no means appeared contemptible to her sagacious vision: she had thought him poorer than he was, though she had always given him credit for those riches of the heart which she so well knew how to value. But it was his nature to attribute his success to anything rather than his own merits, and

especially to the good offices of his friend ; and therefore, upon the receipt of a certain spontaneous and most satisfactory epistle from Mrs Tyndall herself, upon a subject that we can guess at, and which also contained an allusion to Arthur's words, he at once set down at least half his good fortune as debt he owed to Arthur. If the latter had permitted him to discharge it in so extravagant a fashion, he would have sacrificed what was to him (for it was the height of term-time) most valuable time, in attendance upon his friend during convalescence ; but the latter would not hear of that, and so soon as he was able to leave Brignon, a spot become hateful to him from association, and remove to Brussels, whither he had been ordered by the doctors, he dismissed Adair to Law and Love.

Jack prospered in both ; and after some months, conveyed to Arthur the news of his approaching marriage, with the expression of an earnest hope that his friend would find himself sufficiently recovered in health and spirits to be present at it. He received a letter in reply which shocked him. There was no word in it of complaint or repining, and yet it was easy to read in it that the writer was supremely wretched. There was in particular an attempt at cheerfulness in it, that to Adair, who knew his friend so well, seemed to be the language of a breaking heart. Now and then, though rarely, the bitterness that lay beneath the jest shewed its sharp lines. 'You will not suppose, dear Jack, that I cannot come because I am more pleasantly engaged ; or that I will have naught to do with marriage, or giving in marriage, because I am in heaven. It is not quite heaven, this living abroad —alone—among strange scenes, which have nevertheless no interest for me, and among strange people who seem phantoms, so little has my flesh and blood in common with them ; and yet I feel it better to be here than at home. There is at least nothing to remind me of the Past—or *almost nothing*. (When we next meet—if we do meet—I will explain these last two words, for they contain an enigma.) . . . Next to the news of your own happiness, the tidings of dear Mrs Somers' slow but sure recovery of her usual health and spirits delight me. How I envy her these "low beginnings of content." . . . You speak of there being some possibility of your making your marriage-tour in this direction, in case I should still be at Brussels. That is only like your old kindness, and Blanche's. Of course I cannot say "Don't come :" it will be bliss to see you ; but, to tell you the honest truth, I am not quite the company for a bride and bridegroom. At all events, give me due notice of your coming, that I may put a wreath on my death's head.'

Nothing more was heard of Arthur before the wedding, except that a very magnificent present arrived for Blanche, from Brussels.

'Why, it is fit for a queen !' exclaimed she in expostulation at its splendour, but with a beaming look, nevertheless ; for what woman's eyes ever gazed on her own diamonds without reflecting some portion of their effulgence !

'That is why the dear old fellow has sent them, because he knows you are my queen,' said Jack tenderly.

'At all events,' said Blanche, 'he must have paid a royal price for them.—Must he not, Mrs Somers ?'

The old lady happened to be calling in Eaton Square, where she was a frequent and welcome

visitor, when the tiara arrived. Blanche's remark drew a most unexpected reply from her.

'Yes, indeed, my dear, he must,' assented she. 'And wherever the poor man found the money—But, O dear ! O dear ! I forgot. I've been and let it out, and I promised not.' She wrung her hands, and began to cry quite piteously.

'Pray, don't tell us anything, my dear Mrs Somers, that ought to be secret,' observed Mrs Tyndall, 'or which it distresses you to reveal.' This good lady was burning with curiosity, and therefore deserved the greater credit for her scrupulous delicacy.

'Oh, it don't distress me to *talk* about it,' said Mrs Somers, 'though it pained me very much to have to do it : and since I have once let it out of the bag, I can't put it back again, so you may just as well have it. We are all friends here, as the saying is, and I know it won't go no farther.'

Her little audience looked adhesion to this sentiment, but none of them had any suspicion of the nature of the confidence that was about to be repeated in them.

'The fact is *this*, my dears,' said Mrs Somers (she had taken to call Jack 'my dear' ever since his engagement), 'Arthur Tyndall has done a very foolish thing. He was always generous in his way, poor fellow, whatever his short-comings, and when he married, it was more through my lawyer's doing than his own that he had even a life-interest secured to him on my dear Helen's property. He wanted it to be all tied up to her and hers. I think it very likely indeed (for he looked but little into business matters) that he concluded it was so ; but, at all events, when my poor darling died, he formally gave up what was his own, and insisted on my taking back at once whatever he had received with her on his marriage. Heaven knows, now she has gone, that *I* have no use for it, and so I told him ; but he was stiff as brocade about it, and not to be moved from his intention. It was very wrong of me to tell about it, since he particularly enjoined upon me not to do so ; but when I saw that beautiful present, I couldn't help saying to myself : "Why, where on earth did he get the money to buy it ?" only—like a fool—I said it aloud.'

At these words of Mrs Somers, her three hearers were not only astonished, but distressed : Blanche on account of the magnificence of the present that had been made to her, and which it was now made plain the giver could ill afford ; but her mother and lover for another reason, which pained them even more, though both forbore to mention it. They felt it was not pride, as good, easy Mrs Somers imagined, which had prevented Arthur's reaping any advantage from Helen's death, but the consciousness—overstrained and exaggerated though it might be—of his own deficiencies as her husband, and of the estrangement that had taken place between them ; and coupling this intelligence with his late letter, and with what they had seen in him at Brignon, they felt only too certain that his present unhappiness was due to this morbid reflection, rather than to the mere sense of loss. This conviction made Adair secretly more resolved than ever to see, and, if possible, comfort his old friend, upon the first opportunity, and accordingly Brussels was decisively fixed on as one of the places to be visited on their marriage tour. The wedding took place ; and a few weeks afterwards, Mr and Mrs

John Adair found themselves in that town accordingly. In consequence of an alteration in the trains, they arrived at the *Hôtel du Parc*—where they had ordered rooms, and where Arthur himself was located—some hours before they were expected, and he did not happen to be within. The place being new to them, they went out for a stroll in the Park, and presently sat down on one of the seats of its broad walks. There were a good many promenaders, but one in particular attracted Adair's attention. He was a man of middle height, very thin, and, to judge by his gray beard, considerably advanced in age, yet he walked at a pace so quick that it could scarcely have been used save by a young man. Threading in and out among the throng, he almost reminded one of a skater, so rapid were his movements; and yet, as it seemed, he had no object in view but to reach the end of the gravel walk, and then come back again.

'That is some Englishman taking a constitutional,' observed Jack, pointing him out to Blanche. 'No wonder, judging from such specimens, that foreigners think us mad.'

'Englishman, my dear husband!' gasped Blanche—'that is Arthur himself.'

'Heaven forbid: it is impossible; and yet—'

'Come away, John, pray,' cried Blanche excitedly: 'if he were to come nearer, he would recognise us easily enough; you remember what he wrote about giving him notice of our arrival; I am sure he would rather meet us in the hotel.'

Jack obeyed his bride, as in duty bound; but he could not help turning back on his way again and again to watch the spectral figure, which, changed as it was, he now recognised indeed for his old friend. That misery should have made him gray even in so short a time, was barely possible, but what had given him that wild and wandering look?

'What can be the matter with him, Blanche?'

'Sorrow and solitude, dear John, I fear,' said she. 'If I lost you, should not I look wan and wild?'

Jack pressed his darling's arm in acknowledgment of her pretty speech, but in truth he could see little parallel in the two cases. It was no use, however, to speculate upon the causes that had thus affected Arthur; what he had to think of was the best means to mitigate or remove them. In this he was more than seconded by Blanche herself.

'Remember, dearest Jack,' said she, 'that though I can never be so happy as with you alone, there is nothing I would not do for Arthur; and if you think we can do him good by staying here, or by taking him with us elsewhere, his company will be always welcome to me.'

As they were just then in that particularly open space called 'the Plain,' in front of the *Hôtel du Parc*, Jack could not express his feelings in the way that would have been most gratifying to both parties; but he squeezed her soft plump arm again, informed her (though not for the first time) that she was an angel, and accepted with gratitude the offer of her help.

'You have proposed the very plan that has occurred to myself, Blanche, but which, without your connivance, would have been useless. It is from you, far more than from me, that Arthur's cure must come, if it comes at all. It is not in man to condole with his fellow on the loss of a wife, as woman can. Only, in this case, you must be very cautious. Poor Helen and Arthur did not pull quite so well together as man and wife, as you

and I shall do, darling (or if not, it will be my fault, not yours). And you remember what the dear fellow said to us at Brignon?'

'Yes, yes,' said Blanche; 'I think I understand. Suppose I was to suggest, for instance, that though an excellent husband in your way, you yourself have your eccentricities—are cold at times, and a little difficult to please; and that, in short, we are not without our quarrels. Then, if he shews surprise (as he well may), I will go on to hint that I am no worse off than other wives, nay, better (and that is surely true, John); that marriage is always more or less of a compromise—'

'I must kiss you, my darling, I really must!' exclaimed Jack in a transport. 'I knew I had married a sensible girl, but you have the wits of all your sex combined! You're a perfect Macchiavelli; and all the time as innocent as a ringdove! Yes, that's exactly what you must make him feel—that he made no worse a husband than other men—and, upon my life, I don't believe he did; it was only that he and Helen were singularly unsuited to one another: if he had married Jenny'—

'Jenny? What! Arthur marry old Jacob Renn's daughter?'

'No, no; I don't mean that—of course not.' ('She's a darling, and I still say, has all the wits of her sex,' muttered Jack to himself, 'but she has also one of their weaknesses.') 'I mean, if he had married any girl who understood him, they would have got on together capitally. While speaking of poor Helen with all the praise and kindness her memory deserves, try to make him feel that also; that is the medicine, if I am not mistaken, for his morbid thoughts. And now—for he will be here in a few minutes—not a word of our having seen him in the Park; and do not seem shocked or astonished at his changed appearance; and, please Heaven, we shall bring him right yet.'

It was difficult, notwithstanding that they had seen him already, to express no surprise when they met Arthur: his haggard air, his nervous manner, his joyless tones, were so marked and conspicuous, directly the first emotion of pleasure, which this meeting with his old friends evoked, had subsided; but Blanche played her part to perfection; and after a time, Arthur grew more at his ease: it was clear he had expected some remark to be expressed upon his changed appearance, and was relieved at its not having been made. He asked cordially after Mrs. Tyndall, and also after Uncle Magus, who was far from well (they did not tell him that the shock of Helen's death had been the chief cause of prostrating the old man); but his most anxious inquiries were after Mrs. Somers. He seemed surprised, though well pleased, to hear that she had regained so much of her old health and spirits; and this offered an opportunity for the two conspirators to speak a word in season: how the loss of even those that should be dearest to us can never be intended to cloud our whole lives long, and if a Rachel weeping for her only child could be thus comforted, and submit herself to Fate's decree, so should a husband also.

These sentiments and reflections, of course, were not intruded, nor fitted with pointed personal application, but Arthur evidently understood their drift. He did not attempt to combat them, but listened in silence, with a sort of affectionate sadness, that shewed he was grateful for the kindness that

prompted them. Not until Blanche had retired to her room, and Jack produced the pipes and tobacco—for his bride was far too wise a woman to deprive her husband of that solace; her mission, she justly thought, was to increase his joys, and not diminish them—did Arthur let fall a word about his own condition. It was in answer to a question from Adair, ‘When are you coming back to us in England, old fellow?’ that he looked up into his friend’s face, and slowly said: ‘All places are alike to me, Jack, now.’

‘But not all people,’ rejoined the other: ‘the warmth of your welcome to us to-day would alone disprove that.’

‘Of course I am glad to see you and Blanche, Jack. Yes. I feel to-day for the first time since—since Helen’s death, that I am still united by a strand or two to the rest of my fellow-creatures; I had thought they had all parted, and that I was quite alone—quite alone!’

‘You are doing yourself great harm, Arthur, leading this solitary life: at your age, you have no right thus to throw yourself away. I thought, when I left you here six months ago, that you had begun to look life in the face, and to pluck up spirits.’

‘So I had, so I did, Jack,’ answered Arthur in desponding tones. ‘I was getting better, wasn’t I?’

‘Of course you were; and why did not the improvement continue? That your sense of loss should have been keen was only to have been expected by those who knew you; your best friends would not have wished it otherwise; but the dead should not haunt the living for ever.’

‘They do haunt them—they do, Jack,’ answered Arthur, in low grave tones. His white face seemed to grow paler, his form more gaunt and thin, and each particular hair in his gray beard to stand out from the flesh, as he added: ‘I am a Haunted man.’

Adair was more than shocked; his heart sank within him at the sudden thought: ‘This man is mad.’ But he did not move a muscle, nor suffer his voice to lose its ordinarily cheerful tone, as he replied: ‘Well, we are all more or less haunted men, Arthur; and the more we shut ourselves out from those who were intended to be our fellow-creatures, and live in our own thoughts, the more ghosts we see.’

‘You are speaking of mere fancies, Jack. When I was shipwrecked and half-starved, I had fancies; though I was broad awake, I saw scenes with the inward eye—ay, and people too—quite as vividly as that in which I really was; but I knew that it was fancy, nevertheless.’

‘And what is it you see now, old fellow?’

‘Nothing now, thank Heaven; but what I have seen, I may see again to-night, to-morrow; and the fear of it, the terror of it, Jack, has made me what you see. Listen. It was about four months after you left me, and one before you wrote me word of your approaching marriage—and as you say, I was getting stronger and more cheerful; so far from courting solitude, as I do now, I felt inclined to mix with society, and when I did so, found myself the better for it. I had no friends here—scarcely an acquaintance, indeed—so that such gatherings as I frequented were necessarily public ones. Many persons would perhaps have thought it somewhat soon, after such a loss as I had suffered, to be going about to concerts and theatres, for I have always taken my own way (as you know) in social matters without much thought of Mrs

Grundy, and I did so then. When a masked ball in honour of Prince Henry’s birthday was announced at the theatre, I even attended that, not for the dancing’s sake, for I did not mean to dance, but because some acquaintances I had made at the hotel happened to be going thither, and persuaded me to accompany them.’

‘One moment,’ observed Jack, interrupting him. ‘I don’t wish to anticipate you, though I think I know what is coming. But were you conscious, in going to this ball, that you were doing anything wrong?—I mean anything that jarred ever so little upon your sense of what was right and fitting in connection with your recent loss?’

‘I was not. I had been dining temperately with my friends, and went with them, just as I should have done to an ordinary concert or promenade; not with much expectation of being amused, yet not quite indifferently. I sat in one of the stage-boxes, on a level with the maskers, and observing them; when suddenly my attention was riveted upon one with a black domino—Jack, I am telling you the truth, and no lie—whose gaze seemed to pierce me through and through.’

‘It was a woman, of course,’ said Jack dryly.

‘It was a woman, but not of flesh and blood. I should have known those eyes among a thousand, even if they had not been bent on me (as they were), with such a fierce yet reproachful look, as makes me shudder when I think of it. Jack, those were Helen’s eyes!’

‘You think so,’ said Adair quietly. ‘And yet, are you aware that there is a game played among children—called, I think, Russian Buff—in which the faces of the players are hidden, and only the eyes revealed, wherein the difficulty of recognition, even with those best known to one another, is found to be fully equal to that felt in the English game of Blind Man, where the eyes of the would-be recogniser are bandaged, and he has only the sense of touch to help him?’

‘I know that, and yet I recognised those eyes. Nay, what is more, and worse, she moved her mask aside for an instant, and shewed me Helen’s face: pale, angry, cold, as I had often seen it, and (Heaven help me!) helped to make it. Then, when I sprang up in horror, though without a word, for terror had paralysed my tongue, she glided among the dancers, and disappeared.’ Here he stopped, overcome by deep emotion, and it was some moments ere he could resume his narration. ‘Ever since that day, I have lived in solitude, or if, by chance, I mix with crowds, I move through them at speed, and gaze neither to left nor right, lest I should see that sight again. The remembrance of it is hateful to me; the thought of it, ever present as it is, weighs on my spirits, and is eating away my life.’

‘So much is clear,’ said Jack, with gravity. ‘The effect, unhappily, can be seen by everybody; but the cause, as I conclude—this spectral vision, if you will have it so—no other person saw except yourself?’

‘O yes; two other men were in the box with me, and as I sprang up, followed the direction of my eyes, and saw it. To them, of course, it only seemed a woman masked.’

‘May I explain it?’ said Jack, smiling.

‘Explain it! I would give all that I possessed, friend, if you or any other man could but do so,’ sighed Arthur despairingly.

'Let me try, at all events,' said Adair cheerfully. 'You were not conscious of any wrong-doing, you say, in going to this masked ball; but nevertheless, it was the first scene of the kind which you had visited since your great loss: there must, therefore, have been some underlying sense at least of incongruity in such a proceeding; the idea, "How soon!" must have crossed you, if only for an instant. Did it not?'

'I have no recollection of it doing so,' answered Arthur, with a faint smile of incredulity.

'Still, it may have done so; and when you suddenly found yourself gazing with some interest at a pair of fine blue eyes, your conscience smote you, though you knew it not, by causing your thoughts to instantly revert to Helen. Your face at the same time betrayed your thoughts; and the young woman in the black domino, taking it as a bad compliment, no doubt, that you looked so weird and startled at her, when she would have had you smile, flashed rage and scorn at you. Moreover, to shew you what a prize you had missed by your ill-temper, she slipped her mask aside, and let you see her face. She would be as much astonished, doubtless, as you were yourself, to know she frightened you.'

'But I *saw* her face, Jack; and though it was but for an instant, the recognition could not have been more complete had I gazed at it for hours.'

'It was not mutual, I suppose, however?' said Jack, laughing.

'It was, so help me Heaven!' said Arthur solemnly. 'If wonder, or caprice, or any other easily aroused feeling, had been the expression of the features, I should have doubted, no matter how like had been the face itself to that of Helen; but in place of those, there was a certain awful significance which compelled belief—dread reproach and menace! O Jack,' cried the unhappy man with a shudder, and putting his hand up as though to shut out the vision he described, 'I cannot bear to speak of it! Your supposition, however cogent to yourself, must needs weigh light as air to me, who have seen with my own eyes. I beseech you let us talk of something else.'

And the subject was dropped accordingly.

CHAPTER XXXII.—AN UNLOOKED-FOR MEETING.

Again and again, on subsequent occasions, did Adair endeavour to lead the conversation towards this same topic, in hopes to shake the morbid conviction of his friend; but Arthur so obviously declined the argument as something not only distasteful but distressing, that he was obliged to abandon his good intent. Adair spent not only the rest of his honeymoon, but several weeks beyond it, at Brussels, and only left it when compelled by urgent business. It was plain that the presence of himself or Blanche was not only grateful but beneficial to Arthur, and they not only used their utmost efforts to win him from his melancholy, but did their best to carry him off with them to England. From Brussels, however, he declined to move, and there they left him, not without some grave misgivings not only for his health, but for his reason. Blanche had indeed no hope of ever seeing her cousin himself again; and though Jack thought he knew of a remedy for his old friend, it could not be applied. Months and months passed away, and only by an occasional letter, uncom-

plaining as usual, yet eloquent of gloom and wretchedness in its tone, did Arthur give sign of his existence. Yet he was not forgotten, by faithful Jack; and when talking of their going out of town at Easter, 'What do you think, Blanche,' said he, 'of running down to Swansdale for a week or two? If we proposed to do so, it is just possible that Arthur might be induced to join us there.'

'Swansdale will be charming,' replied Blanche delightedly—'that is, if we do but have bright weather—and though, in my opinion, his old home is the last place likely to prove attractive to one to whom the past is so painful, ask Arthur, by all means.'

As Blanche had predicted, Arthur declined this invitation very positively; and though, in the same note in which he did so, he pressed them to use his house as their own home, the idea was not agreeable to them. Without its host, and with its recent unhappy associations, Swansdale Hall was not quite the place adapted for a holiday residence, so they took rooms at the *Welcome Inn*.

That spring chanced to set in as spring in England often does, with a foretaste of summer, afterwards to be compensated for, alas, by a relapse into winter. Tree and herb wore their brightest green; such flowers as there were, gave forth their freshest fragrance; and the river danced in the sunlight, as though there were no bleak winds and leaden skies in store to ruffle and vex it. Jack and Blanche were on the water from bright morn to chilly eve; they fished, they rowed (and a very 'pretty oar' Blanche looked, and *was*, let me tell you), and they sketched. They took their honeymoon all over again, in short, and enjoyed it quite as much as the first. Then suddenly, as though to remind them that they were mortals, to whom happiness without cloud is forbidden, a messenger from the Hall arrived with evil news. Uncle Magus, with whom they had dined but the day before (he had not been well enough throughout the winter to leave his own roof), had been taken suddenly very ill. On arriving at the cottage, they found these tidings only too well confirmed. He had had a paralytic stroke, which, although he was already recovering from its immediate effects, the doctor told them would be fatal. If he had not possessed a constitution of iron, grief for his son's fate would long ago have killed him; it had survived that, and the many years of solitude and bitter thoughts which had followed it; it had survived, too, his favourite Helen's death, but the shock had weakened the old man, and left him with little strength to bear any attack of disease. Yet even now his will was as indomitable as ever. His chief solicitude seemed to be as to whether the effects of the paralysis would be confined to the left side, where it had taken place; and would therefore leave his right arm free to pursue the task in which he had been of late engaged. The approach of death, of which he was quite cognisant, filled him with no alarm; his only apprehension was that there would be no time to finish that great legacy to posterity—his manuscript on the *Duello*. He would have sat up in bed, to consult authorities, and jot down notes, even now, and could only be restrained from doing so by the argument that his object would be defeated by the very means he would have taken to effect it.

'He cannot live ten days in any case,' was the

doctor's verdict: whereupon Adair drove round to the railway station on his way back to the inn that night, and telegraphed for Arthur.

'If that be finished,' Uncle Magus had said, referring to his *magnum opus*, 'and if I could but see Arthur before I die, there would be nothing else to wait for.' The last part of that speech was read in Brussels next morning word for word; and, as Adair had expected, they brought Arthur to Swansdale Hall within two days, or as fast as steam could bring him. He took up his quarters at the Hall, alone, though Jack pressed his coming to the *Welcome*, but tended his relative day and night assiduously.

'I did not know you at first,' said the old man with tender frankness, 'but I know you now; there is no hand so kind, no voice so dear to me as yours, Arty, nor ever has been since I lost my own poor boy.'

Arthur was indeed but the shadow of his former self—perceptibly thinner and more aged even than when last seen at Brussels; but his bodily health seemed good, and his plans for the future had, it seemed, at last taken some shape.

'I am going,' said he to Adair, 'whither I ought to have gone two years ago, and would to Heaven I had! So soon as Uncle Magus has bidden us farewell, I leave England for ever.'

'But for what place?'

'That is no matter, so long as it is somewhere, far removed from home and all its cruel associations—South America, perhaps. I shall take the first ship from Liverpool that promises the farthest voyage.'

'You have had, I trust, no recurrence of that painful fancy?' inquired Jack softly, and after a long silence.

'I have not,' said Arthur, 'if, at least (as I suppose), you mean by "fancy," a sight as real and infinitely more terrible than this deathbed, to which you have summoned me. No, Jack, no; I have seen Helen's face no more.'

'Nor ever will see it, dear friend,' urged Jack, 'unless in heaven.'

But Arthur returned no answer; it was plain that his hallucination on that point was as confirmed as ever.

Though Uncle Magus had rallied for a day or two, he was now clearly dying; but still he would insist on being taken out of bed, and clothed so far as it was possible, in order that he might sit in his old arm-chair with his desk and manuscript before him. He spoke seldom, but always to the purpose to the last. 'Let my poor boy be buried with me,' he had said, pointing to the embalmed body of his son, which had been the companion of his solitude for more than a quarter of a century: 'and all I have to leave is yours, Arty'—'Arty' had been his pet name for Arthur as a boy, now unconsciously resumed after those many years—'the title-deeds, you know,' he added, with great gravity, 'are yours by right.'

If he had ever really given up the idea that these were of great value, which is doubtful, it revived in him now. All his old associations did so, to judge by the snatches of speech which he uttered when his eyes were closed and he thought himself alone. Once he burst out with: 'By George, I've missed him!' in accents of intense disappointment; and once he cried: 'Starved, starved, starved!' in a tone that chilled his hearers' hearts.

A pagan, suckled in a creed outworn, though he was, and one to whom the world he was about to enter could scarcely be more strange to him than that which he was leaving, he had his sympathies and affections. His views about 'ancestry' and 'blood' indeed may have been as worthless as those proclaimed by the merest parvenu in a club, or any female tuft-hunter who manœuvres for a lord at her Baker Street dinner-table, but there was this difference—his were genuine; he believed in them as he did in his own existence; and what there ever had been of courage and chivalry inherent in those accidents which he deemed virtues, he possessed. In bed he refused to stay even at the very last, and died, as it were, in harness, feebly holding the feeble pen with which he would have defended an old-world and died-out custom.

'Arrived at the Releager (or appointed place)'—were the last words he wrote, ere he himself was removed to his Releager. The dying warrior that bade his sons put on his armour, and set him on his war-horse, that he might die as he had lived, was a type of him; but stern and ungenial as he was, Uncle Magus left those behind him who loved him and mourned his loss. He was laid, with his long-dead son beside him, close to Helen's grave, in accordance with his own express desire.

It was the first occasion on which Arthur Tyndall had appeared in public since his return, and the appearance of the widower was such that not a few of the spectators shook their heads, and remarked beneath their breath, that it would not be long before the squire followed his young wife to Swansdale churchyard.

He was to remain but one day more—in order to settle the dead man's affairs at the home that was now made more desolate than before, and then to depart from it, in all probability for ever. On that day he had been persuaded, though with difficulty, to dine with the Adairs at the *Welcome*, and Jack himself, lest some excuse should be sent by him at the last, walked over to the Hall to fetch him. Their path lay by the river-side, past the lock itself, and through a hundred scenes which were redolent of Arthur's palmy days of youth and love; but he kept his eyes fixed upon the ground in silence, as a mourner follows a bier. Jack attempted no word of comfort or consolation; but when that dreary walk was done, and the well-remembered inn was reached, said: 'We have the Blue Parlour, Arthur. Will you wait in there a moment while I speak a word with Blanche in her room?'

Jack entered the chamber, and, closing the door behind him, found his wife awaiting him with a white and anxious face.

'I have done it,' whispered she in great agitation. 'She is there alone.'

'And I have sent him in,' answered her husband gravely. Then the two stood and listened with straining ears for some sound from the Blue Parlour, which was almost contiguous to where they were. There broke from it one low, passionate cry, which was succeeded by blank silence. Was that she or he? Was it the wail of measureless woe, or the cry of hushed delight? Minutes passed by that seemed hours.

'O Jack, what can have happened? Heaven knows I did it for the best. But what if the sudden shock has been too much for him!'

'Hush, hush! I hear a woman's sob: that is a

good sign. Women always cry when they are very happy.

Without attempting to combat this cynical observation—though, indeed, he who made it had neither the look nor the tone of a cynic—‘Come with me, Jack,’ cried Blanche impetuously. Her curiosity was overwhelming, but she could not yet restrain her fears. They went out together into the passage. It was she who knocked at the Blue Parlour door, but when there was no answer, it was Jack who opened it. Arthur was sitting on the sofa by the side of Jenny Wren, and with his arm around her waist: he was gray and thin, of course, as before, yet so bright was his smile that he looked already as though he had won back ten years of his lost youth. Jenny was neither gray nor thin, and looked charming; her face, of late grown very pale and thoughtful, wore a little flush upon it that made it simply perfection; even when these intruders entered, her glorious eyes, made soft with tears, turned not towards them, but remained fixed on Arthur.

‘Jack,’ exclaimed he, rising with outstretched hands, ‘this is your doing, I know. God bless you for it!'

‘Nay, my dear friend; it was a joint stratagem of mine and Blanche’s. Indeed, she was the chief conspirator; so—if you have a kiss to spare—kiss her; she’s waiting for it.’

THE LAST HALF-CENTURY OF THE STAGE.
To Mr J. R. Planché, the inventor of burlesques, it is certain that the London world at least is indebted for as much harmless pleasure as to any man. We associate him not only with brilliant scenes, and gorgeous but accurate costumes, that before his time did not exist, but with a lively yet delicate fancy, which we miss while missing him. If we have a grudge against him, it is the fact that, having accustomed us to these delicacies, he now writes no more, and has left the stage to authors who (with one honourable exception, that of Mr Gilbert) copy his style without his merits. To many playgoers, the publication of the *Recollections** of Mr Planché will not only be most welcome, but an agreeable surprise, for, from his long silence, they may well have supposed him off the boards of Life, which, we are happy to say, is far from being the case indeed. His mind is as vigorous and lively as ever, and well stored, as may easily be imagined, with anecdotes of the drama, and personal remembrances of those whom we are accustomed to term, *par excellence*, ‘public favourites.’ He has lived, however, long beyond the threescore years and ten allotted to ordinary mortals, having ‘made his first appearance’ in the world, as he characteristically tells us, ‘in Old Burlington Street, on the 27th of February 1796, about the time the farce begins at the Haymarket: was received with considerable attention by an indulgent audience, and, with the help of new dresses and decorations, became, in due time, a very respectable representative of Little Pickle in the *Spoiled Child*.’ His parents were French refugees, and his father was a watchmaker; and apropos of watches, Mr Planché tells us two amusing stories. The one is in connection with that sententious and economical

sovereign, George III. to whom our author’s father once took a watch which had been left with him to be mended, and it had a very dirty ribbon attached to it. ‘Your majesty wants a new ribbon,’ suggested Mr Planché, as he well might. ‘Pooh, pooh!’ was the royal reply. ‘Wash it, wash it!’ The other story, though not ‘about a king,’ is equally good and characteristic.

The Duke of Athol having one day, at Blair-Athol, entertained a large party at dinner, produced in the evening many curious and interesting family relics for their inspection, amongst them a small watch which had belonged to Charles Stuart, and been given by him to one of the duke’s ancestors. When the company were upon the point of departing, the watch was suddenly missed, and was searched for in vain upon the table and about the apartments. The duke was exceedingly vexed, and declared that of all the articles he had exhibited, the lost watch was the one that he most valued. The guests naturally became exceedingly uncomfortable, and eyed each other suspiciously. No person was present, however, who could possibly be suspected, and courtesy forbade any stronger step than the marked expression of the noble host’s extreme annoyance and distress. Each departed to his home in an exceedingly unenviable state of mind, and the mysterious disappearance of the royal relic was a subject of discussion for several months in society. A year afterwards, the duke being again at Blair-Athol, was dressing for dinner, and in the breast-pocket of a coat which his valet had handed to him, felt something which proved to be the missing watch. ‘Why, —!’ exclaimed his Grace, addressing his man by his name, ‘here’s the watch we hunted everywhere in vain for!’—‘Yes, sir,’ replied the man gravely; ‘I saw your Grace put it in your pocket.’—‘You saw me put it in my pocket, and never mentioned it! Why didn’t you speak at once, and prevent all that trouble and unpleasant feeling?’—‘I didna ken what might ha’ been your Grace’s intentions,’ was the reply of the faithful and discreet Highlander, who saw everything, but said nothing, unless he were directly interrogated.

Master Planché did not take to the paternal trade of watchmaking. He had a playmate at an attorney’s office, and therefore wished to be an attorney; he was fond of drawing, and therefore thought he would be an artist; he liked cricket, and suggested that as a profession; but in the end, having suffered from *cacoethes scribendi* from the tender age of ten, and written a number of all sorts of works, he decided, in order that they should be published, upon becoming a bookseller; and to a bookseller he was accordingly articled. It was now that his theatrical propensities began to develop themselves. ‘I now turned amateur actor, and at the Theatres Private, Berwick Street, Pancras Street, Catherine Street, and Wilton Street, murdered many principal personages of the acting drama’ in pasteboard. Subsequently, ‘finding nothing in Shakspeare and Sheridan worthy of his abilities,’ he determined on writing a play himself. ‘The offspring of this thought was the burlesque entitled *Amoroso, King of Little Britain*, which, being completed and handed round amongst my brother-amateurs, was by one of them shewn to Mr Harley of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. That establishment happened to be at the moment in a state of absolute starvation—the only cause I can

* *Recollections and Reflections of J. R. Planché (Somerset Herald): a Professional Autobiography.* Tinsley Brothers.

imagine of its suddenly snapping at so humble a morsel. Snap at it, however, it did; and the excellent acting and singing of Mr Harley, Mr Knight, Mr Oxberry, Mr G. Smith, Mrs Orger, and Mrs Bland secured for it a popularity it could never otherwise have enjoyed. This, to me, most unexpected event (I knew nothing of its being in the theatre before I saw it announced in the bills for performance) occurred on the 21st of April 1818, and at once determined my future.' This was certainly not to be wondered at. To meet with such a dramatic opportunity at twenty-two years of age, was (to any one who knows the difficulty of getting a play put on the stage) a piece of unprecedented good-fortune, and might indeed promise well for the success of the young dramatist; and as a proof of the augury, we may here mention, that in the end—if, indeed, the end has come, which we would fain hope it has not—Mr Planché has brought out no less than one hundred and seventy pieces on the boards. It is no wonder, then, that these *Recollections* of his form of themselves a history of the British stage for the last half-century. His father, like himself, was a long-lived man, and to instance what a couple of generations can do in the way of memory—'I have often heard my father mention,' says our author, 'that at twelve years old he passed over Tower Hill during the execution of the rebel lords, Kilmarnock and Balmerino, August 10, 1746.' Mr William Dance, to whom he mentioned this circumstance, instantly capped it by exclaiming: 'My father built the scaffold.'

Here is something noteworthy which Mr Planché himself remembers to have witnessed.

'Dining recently with an old friend and school-fellow, the conversation turned upon the ages of the persons present, and each was asked what was the earliest public event he could remember. My answer was: "The general illumination for the peace of Amiens?" "The peace of Amiens? Why, that was in 1801!" exclaimed a learned judge who sat near to me. "Exactly; but I remember it perfectly." He turned to his next neighbour, and, in an audible whisper, said: "The Wandering Jew!" In support of my assertion, I then related the following circumstance. Monsieur Otto, the French Minister, resided, at that time, in Portman Square, and my father having moved from Old Burlington Street into Park Street, Grosvenor Square, took me to see the illumination at the French Embassy, which was exceedingly magnificent. The house was one blaze of coloured lamps from parlour to parapet. Green olive-branches with red berries—not natural, but effective—and other pacific emblems surrounded the windows; and above those of the drawing-room, occupying the whole breadth of the building, glittered in golden-coloured lamps the word "Concorde." Though as nearly English as a French word could well be, it was misinterpreted by a number of sailors in the crowd, who began shouting: "We are not conquered! Pull it down!" The mob, always ripe for a row, took up the cry, and was proceeding from uproar to violence, when some one announced from the doorsteps that the obnoxious word should be altered; and a host of lamp-lighters were speedily seen busily employed in removing and substituting for it "Amitié." Unfortunately, this was also misunderstood by the ignorant masses for "Ennemy," and the storm again raged with redoubled fury. Ultimately was done what should have been done

at first. The word "Peace" was displayed, and peace was restored to Portman Square for the rest of the evening. The peace itself was of not much longer duration.'

At the age of eight, Master J. R. Planché was at a school at Chelsea, and slept in a room with two young gentlemen of his own age and tastes, who 'amused themselves with writing plays, and enacting the principal parts in them, displaying considerable histrionic ability. My early developed theatrical proclivities naturally riveted the bonds of friendship which were speedily formed between us. The youngest was about my own age. He had glossy black hair, curling gracefully over his head, and a pair of piercing dark eyes that sparkled with humour and intelligence. They left school before me. The eldest I never saw again; he went to America, and died there; but my especial friend rose to high distinction at the bar, and having filled the important offices of Solicitor and Attorney General, is, at the present moment, Lord Chief-baron of the Exchequer. It was at his table the conversation took place I have just related, and my interlocutor was Baron Bramwell.'

Another curious political reminiscence of our author's was the spectacle of Sir Francis Burdett being taken from his house in Piccadilly to the Tower (sixty-two years ago!), and artillerymen standing with lighted matches and loaded field-pieces in Berkeley Square. Of theatrical events, with which his life was more concerned, his recollections go back even further yet: he saw Mrs Jordan act in the *Country Girl*; George Frederick Cooke play Iago; John Kemble in Macbeth, Brutus, and King Lear; and Mrs Siddons in Lady Macbeth at Covent Garden. He was indeed but very young at that time, yet the impression the last-named actress made upon him was such, that, 'on meeting her in society, several years afterwards, I could not entirely divest myself of awe on being presented to her.'

Jack Bannister is a name which seems to suggest quite an antediluvian epoch of the stage; yet our author was personally acquainted with him, as also with Harley, Oxberry (the elder), Mrs Glover, Mrs Orger, and those two surpassing beauties, Mrs Mardyn and Mrs Robinson. His play of *Amoroso, King of Little Britain*, though it was not a good one, and received its just pecuniary recompense in the sum of nothing at all, had introduced him to all those charming people. Beside the actors, the *habitués* of the green-room became known to him, and among them the notorious Sir Lumley Skeffington, 'one of the last of that peculiar style of fop whose dress and manners were unsparingly caricatured in the print-shops, and became conventional on the stage. But with all his extravagance of attire, his various-coloured under-waistcoats, his rouged cheeks, and coal-black wig, with portentous *toupeté*, poor old Sir Lumley Skeffington was a perfect gentleman, a most agreeable companion, and bore "the stings and arrows of outrageous fortune" with Spartan courage and Christian resignation. Though his fair-weather friends had deserted him, no complaint or reproach ever passed his lips. But once only, during the many years we were acquainted, did I hear him allude to the misery of his position. We were the only two guests at the dinner-table of a mutual friend, and Sir Lumley had been particularly lively and entertaining. Our host being called out of the room to speak to

some one on business, I congratulated the old baronet on his excellent spirits. "Ah! my dear Mr Planché," he replied, "it's all very well while I am in society; but I give you my honour, I should heartily rejoice if I felt certain that after leaving this house to-night I should be found dead on my own doorstep." I shall never forget the deep but quiet pathos of these sad words. I am happy to add that he lived to inherit a small property, and ended his days in peace and comfort.

The last representative Falstaff 'in my time,' says our author, which is certainly high praise considering from whom it comes, and the duration of his experience, was Downton. 'His eye had the right roguish twinkle; his large protruding under-lip, the true character of sensuality; his laugh, the fat, self-satisfied chuckle: but his memory was notoriously treacherous, and the text suffered severely. "D— your dialogue," he used to say; "give me the situations;" just as Ducrow, in later days, was wont to exclaim: "Cut out the *dialect*, and come to the 'osses.'

Following close on *Amoroso*, our author wrote a speaking harlequinade, called *Little Red Riding-hood*, for Elliston, who was at that time the proprietor of the Olympic Pavilion, as the theatre in Wych Street was then called. 'On the first night of its representation (December 21, 1818) every trick failed, not a scene could be induced to close or to open properly, and the curtain fell at length amidst a storm of disapprobation. I was with Mr Elliston and his family in a private box. He sent round an order to the prompter that not one of the carpenters, scene-shifters, or property-men were to leave the theatre till he had spoken to them. As soon as the house was cleared, the curtain was raised, and all the culprits assembled on the stage in front of one of the scenes in the piece representing the interior of a cottage, having a door in one half, and a latticed window in the other. Elliston led me forward, and standing in the centre, with his back to the foot-lights, harangued them in the most grandiloquent language—expatiated on the enormity of their offence, their ingratitude to the man whose bread they were eating, the disgrace they had brought upon the theatre, the cruel injury they had inflicted on the young and promising author by his side; then pointing in the most tragical attitude to his wife and daughters, who remained in the box, bade them look upon the family they had ruined, and burying his face in his handkerchief, to stifle his sobs, passed slowly through the door in the scene, leaving his auditors silent, abashed, and somewhat affected, yet rather relieved by being let off with a lecture. The next minute, the casement in the other flat was thrown violently open, and thrusting in his head, his face scarlet with fury, he roared out: "I discharge you all!" I feel my utter incapacity to convey an idea of this ludicrous scene; and I question whether any one unacquainted with the man, his voice, action, and wonderful facial expression, could thoroughly realise the glorious absurdity of it from verbal description.' Elliston was the best actor of his day in those parts in which Charles Mathews the younger has since distinguished himself—the gentlemanly rakes and agreeable rattles of high comedy. Within a few hours of his death, he objected to take some medicine; and in order to induce him to do so, he was told he should have

some brandy-and-water afterwards. A faint smile stole over his face, the old light gleamed for a moment in his glazing eye, as he murmured: 'Bribery and corruption.' They were the last intelligible words he uttered.

'During 1819,' says Mr Planché—and the observation applies to a good many years—'I produced several dramas of various descriptions at sundry theatres.' Among them was *Abūdah*, founded on one of the Tales of the Genii, the ballads in which were 'set by that extraordinary character, Michael Kelly, cruelly described as "Composer of Wines and Importer of Music," and were, I should think, his latest productions in the latter capacity. During one of the rehearsals, a young lady, whose name I will not try to remember, sang wofully out of tune; a shriek of agony, followed by a volley of oaths and objurgations, startled the whole *dramatis persona*, as the utterer was invisible. Kelly, who was a cripple from the effects of gout, had, unknown to any one, hobbed into the house, and taken his seat in a pit-box behind the cloth with which it was covered in the daytime.' The piece was a poor one, yet it had some success; and the fact seems to be that the knowledge or 'knack' of the stage has at least as much to do with the good reception of a play as its intrinsic merits. How else can we account for Walter Scott being 'unable to dramatise his own very dramatic novels'; for Dickens 'trying his prentice hand on the stage for once, and not repeating the experiment'; and for Thackeray 'producing a comedy which, though bespoken by a manager, was pronounced, when presented, to be unactable'?

The account of such failures is distressing; and still more so is the information we incidentally receive from Mr Planché of the manners—or rather want of them—greed, stupidity, and coarseness of managers. Our author himself seems to us to have done his best to spoil them. We are indebted, as we have said before, to Mr Planché for the abolition of those ridiculous anachronisms of the stage which permitted a bag-wig to Brutus, and a gold-laced suit to Macbeth; but we did not know, until we read these *Recollections*, that this good service—involving, as it did, much time, and trouble, and study—was rendered to the British drama *gratuitously*, 'solely and purely for that love of the stage which has ever induced me to sacrifice all personal considerations to what, I sincerely believed, would tend to elevate as well as adorn it.' A ludicrous result of this beneficial change occurred at the Coburg, now known as the Victoria Theatre. A piece was produced there under the title of the *Battle of Hastings*, which the playbill (in imitation of the Covent Garden programme) set forth, would be acted in the most appropriate costumes, 'a list of authorities being quoted for the new dresses and decorations from those general works on costume and armour which I had enumerated in the announcement of *King John*.' However, the occurrence was, at all events, a compliment, and Mr Planché, in company of his friend Dr Coombe, the learned Keeper of the Medals at the British Museum, went to feast their eyes upon this specimen of medieval armour the first night. 'I will not attempt to describe dresses that were indescribable, even by the indefinite term of conventional, and in which I could not detect the faintest resemblance to any portrayed in the

works so unblushingly cited ; but the banners of the rival hosts had obviously been painted from authorities which would have been admitted indisputable by the whole College of Heralds. Armorial bearings, it is true, were not known in the days of the Conqueror, but overlooking that slight anachronism, and the rather important fact, that the arms were not even those borne by the direct descendants of the contending chieftains, the coats, crests, and supporters displayed were heraldically correct, and undeniably those of departed English worthies, noble and gentle, for they were nothing less than the funeral hatchments of some score of lords, ladies, baronets, and members of parliament, which, having hung for the usual period on the walls of their family mansions, had reverted to the undertaker, and been "furnished" by him, for a consideration, to the liberal and enterprising lessee of "the Coburg." There they were, and no mistake. Simply taken out of their frames, and without any alteration of the well-known lozenge form, hoisted on poles, some surmounted by cherubim, others by skulls with cross-bones. A wicked wag might have managed, by the exercise of a little ingenuity, to have appropriated the "hatchments" to the principal personages. The ambitious Norman duke, who aspired to a kingly crown, might have been preceded by one which bore for motto, "Spero meliora." A hint might have been conveyed to the bellicose Bishop of Bayeux by another, with "In celo quies ;" and the royal Saxon standard might have drooped over the prostrate Harold, with "Requiescat in pace."

It is curious enough that this artistic eye for archaeological correctness—so meritorious in itself—should in a manner have eventually cost our author his wits ; for surely a man must have lost his wits, or, at all events, some of them, and especially his sense of humour, to have permitted himself to be made a herald. Mr Planché, to our very great commiseration, writes himself down on the title-page of these volumes, 'Somerset Herald,' and we must say that the only things that we find dull in them are those which refer to that unfortunate calling, and to the very great, but also exceedingly uninteresting personages to whom it is the means of introducing us. To be made to pass from the green-room of old Drury to the *salons* of duchess-countesses, and the waiting-chambers of kings of Spain, is for Mr Planché's readers at least, however he may have enjoyed the ascent himself, an experience which they would have gladly been excused. However, he confesses himself that he has 'armour on the brain,' and remonstrance would be probably thrown away upon a gentleman who rides his hobby, as it were, in 'housings,' and perceives a meaning in prancing unicorns and rampant griffins. Before his stage reforms, let us remember, the only notion of dramatic 'spectacle' was something expensive, quite apart from its beauty and fitness ; of which the following is an amusing example. An enormous looking-glass curtain or act-drop had been advertised at one of the theatres for many weeks, 'and was confidently counted upon as an immense attraction. The house was certainly crowded the first night, and I was amongst the number of the curious, if not of the sanguine spectators. After an overture, to which no attention of course was paid by the excited and impatient audience, the promised novelty was duly displayed ; not one entire plate of glass—that could

not have been expected—but composed of a considerable number of moderately sized plates—I have seen larger in some shop-windows—within an elaborately gilt frame. The effect was anything but agreeable. The glass was all over finger or other marks, and dimly reflected the two tiers of boxes and their occupants. It was no imposition, however ; it was a large mass of plate-glass, and in those days must have cost a great deal of money. There was consequently considerable applause at its appearance. The moment it ceased, some one in the gallery, possessing a stentorian voice, called out : "That's all worry well. Now shew us summut else!" What more cutting commentary could the keenest wit have made upon this costly folly ?

This was not the only occasion on which 'the gods' delighted Mr Planché's ears : when a very bad melodrama was being represented, which was also carelessly put upon the stage, it once met with this remonstrance : 'We don't expect no grammar, but you might let the scenes meet.' The book, indeed, as might be expected, teems with anecdotes of the stage, many of which it would have been a pity not to have had recorded. Mr David Morris was a theatrical manager of unusual honour and principle ; and 'if Providence had added to these qualifications the talents of theatrical management,' would have doubtless been a great success in his vocation ; but on the other hand, he thought he possessed them. 'Fulfilling faithfully his own obligations, he expected, justly enough, equal rectitude on the part of others. Observing, one morning at the rehearsal of some music, that one of the band was quiescent, he leant over from the pit in which he was standing, and touched him on the shoulder : "Why are you not playing, sir ?" —"I have twelve bars' rest, sir," answered the musician.—"Rest ! Don't talk to me about rest, sir ! Don't you get your salary, sir ? I pay you to play and not to rest, sir ! Rest when you've done your work, and not in the middle of it !" If Mr Morris found nobody on the stage by eleven o'clock, he instantly ordered a rehearsal 'of something or other,' for he paid his people, and was resolved they should earn their money. 'So the poor stage-manager had a pleasant time of it. Tom Dibdin, one of the sons of the celebrated nautical poet, and himself the author of many popular dramatic pieces, held that responsible position at the Haymarket in 1823, and had engaged to write a comedy for that theatre. Some weeks having elapsed, and no portion of it being forthcoming, Morris attacked him one day as he was coming through the box-office. "Mr Dibdin ! Where is the comedy you promised me ?" —"My dear sir, what opportunity have I for writing ? I am on the stage all day from ten or eleven in the morning till four in the afternoon. Run home to my dinner, and back again to see the curtain up, and remain till it finally falls, long after midnight. I never have any time for composition." —"No time ! What do you do on Sundays ?"

We sometimes hear the expression 'sold for a song' as a synonym for cheapness. This, however, seems not to be always just, for Mr Planché tells us that, for the well-known ditty of *Gentle Zitella*, written by himself, the late Mr Chappell received upwards of one thousand pounds the first year of his possession of it, and continued to make a considerable income out of it long afterwards. On

the other hand, observes Mr Planché naïvely, 'I profited by it not one shilling.' By a law enacted since that period, however, it appears that the author of a song in a drama is allowed to have some pecuniary interest in it.

In 1831, Mr Planché introduced upon the stage the first of those charming mythological burlesques with which his name will be ever associated. It was called *Prometheus and Pandora*, Madame Vestris sustaining the part of Pandora. 'The extraordinary success of this experiment—for it may justly so be termed—was due not only to the admirable singing and piquante performance of that gifted lady, but also to the charm of novelty imparted to it by the elegance and accuracy of the costume; it having been previously the practice to dress a burlesque in the most *outré* and ridiculous fashion. My suggestion to try the effect of persons picturesquely attired speaking absurd doggerel, fortunately took the fancy of the fair lessee, and the alteration was highly appreciated by the public; but many old actors could never get over their early impressions. Liston thought to the last that Prometheus, instead of the Phrygian cap, tunic, and trousers, should have been dressed like a great lubberly boy in a red jacket and nankeens, with a pinafore all besmeared with lollipop!—a dress, by the way, in which he actually came to a child's party at my house, and insisted on sitting in the lap of my dear old stepmother, who was a great favourite with him. It would be superfluous to say more on this subject than simply that *Olympic Revels* was the first of a series which enjoyed the favour of the public for upwards of thirty years.'

It is most pleasant to learn upon an authority so good as that of Mr Planché's, that actors who have evoked our laughter on the stage are commonly no less amusing in private life. Liston (in spite of all that one has heard respecting his melancholy) was one of this class. His occasional depression was greatly mitigated by practical jokes. 'Walking one day through Leicester Square with Mr Miller, the theatrical bookseller of Bow Street, Liston happened to mention casually that he was going to have tripe for dinner, a dish of which he was particularly fond. Miller, who hated it, said: "Tripe! Beastly stuff! How can you eat it?" That was enough for Liston. He stopped suddenly in the crowded thoroughfare in front of Leicester House, and holding Miller by the arm, exclaimed in a loud voice: "What, sir! So you mean to assert that you don't like tripe?" "Hush!" muttered Miller; "don't talk so loud; people are staring at us." "I ask you, sir," continued Liston, in still louder tones, "do you not like tripe?" "For Heaven's sake, hold your tongue!" cried Miller; "you'll have a crowd round us." And naturally people began to stop and wonder what was the matter. This was exactly what Liston wanted, and again he shouted: "Do you mean to say you don't like tripe?" Miller, making a desperate effort, broke from him, and hurried in consternation through Cranbourne Alley, followed by Liston, bawling after him: "There he goes!—that's the man who doesn't like tripe!" to the immense amusement of the numerous passengers, many of whom recognised the popular comedian, till the horrified bookseller took to his heels and ran, as if for his life, up Long Acre into Bow Street, pursued to his very door-step by a pack of

young ragamuffins, who took up the cry: "There he goes!—the man that don't like tripe!" Munden, again, never met our author in the street without getting astride of his great cotton umbrella, and riding up to him like a boy on a stick. 'Wallack and Tom Cooke would gravely meet, remove with stolid countenances *each other's* hat, bow ceremoniously, replace it, and pass on without exchanging a word, to the astonishment of the beholders. Meadows continually would seat himself on the curb-stone opposite my house after we became neighbours, in Michael's Grove, Brompton, with his hat in his hand, like a beggar, utterly regardless of passing strangers, and remain in that attitude till I or some of my family caught sight of him, and threw him a halfpenny, or threatened him with the police.'

But more humorous in his ways than any comic actor was a personage most unlikely, one would have thought, of all men, to have played such pranks—namely, the dramatic author, Mr Sheridan Knowles. 'An opera was produced at Covent Garden during my engagement, the story of which turned upon the love of a young count for a gipsy girl, whom he subsequently deserts for a lady of rank and fortune; and in the second act there was a fête in the gardens of the château in honour of the bride elect. Mr Binge, who played the count, was seated in an arbour near to one of the wings witnessing a ballet. Knowles, who had been in front during the previous part of the opera, came behind the scenes; and, advancing as near as he could to Binge without being in sight of the audience, called to him in a loud whisper: "Binge!" Binge looked over his shoulder. "Well, what is it?" "Tell me: do you marry the poor gipsy after all?" "Yes," answered Binge impatiently, stretching his arm out behind him, and making signs with it for Knowles to keep back. Knowles caught his hand, pressed it fervently, and exclaimed: "God bless you! You are a good fellow!" This I saw and heard myself, as I was standing at the wing during the time.'

Though it fell to Mr Planché's lot to satirise his contemporaries, he always contrived to accomplish this without giving offence, and indeed of some notoriety it may be truly said that they liked it. He had written a *pièce de circonstance* for the opening of the Haymarket in 1853, called *Mr Buckstone's Ascent of Mount Parnassus*, a sort of travesty of Albert Smith's entertainment, the Ascent of Mont Blanc, at that time in the height of its popularity. So thoroughly did the latter gentleman appreciate his imitator, that, unknown to the manager, he actually contrived one night—his own entertainment closing at ten—to come across, and fill the place of his double, to the great mystification of Mr Buckstone, and the immense amusement of the whole company assembled at the wings to witness the effect. He was immediately recognised by the audience, and received with tumultuous cheers.

Upon the whole, the dramatic world has cause to be grateful to Mr Planché for the character he has given it; though concerning our dramatic criticism, he judiciously holds his peace. What newspaper praise is worth in France, however, we may guess from the following anecdote, with which we take our leave of these two agreeable volumes: 'A *débutant* at a lyrical theatre in Paris solicited

the support of a very influential journalist, notorious for receiving large *doucours* from aspirants to public favour. The young man, by the advice of his friends, had waited on this important personage, and frankly declared that he was utterly unable at that moment to offer him anything worthy of his acceptance ; but that if through his favourable report he succeeded in obtaining an engagement, he should consider himself bound by honour and gratitude to make him the most ample and substantial acknowledgment in his power. The great man dismissed him with a gracious bow ; and the applicant, on the morning after his appearance, read the following notice of it in the journal he had most fear of : “ *C'est un jeune homme qui promet beaucoup ; nous verrons s'il tiendra ses promesses.* ”

WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY. IN THIRTY-FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER XVI.

The sky it seems would pour down stinking pitch,
But that the sea mounting to the welkin's cheek,
Dashes the fire out.

On board the *Arthur's Bride*—she has battled out the night bravely with the storm, and now a pale and sickly dawn is creeping into the east—young Gerard Robertson lies helplessly in his berth. The feeble rays of light that penetrate through the cracks and crevices of the storm-shutters and of the door, do not give him much comfort. The storm still continues, the rushing of the wind, the thundering crash of the waters. The cabin is all afloat ; and at each roll of the ship the water dashes across from side to side, churning and spluttering among the scanty fittings. Seizing the occasion of a moment of lull, Gerard rises from the berth and essays to reach the door, which anon seems an opening to the sky, anon a trap leading to the storehouses of the deep. The door is fastened : it opens inwards, and there is nothing to give him a purchase. In vain he pulls at the handle, in vain he kicks at the panels ; the handle comes off in his hands : his kicks, his shouts, are all unheeded. It is horrible to be shut in here, perhaps to be drowned without a struggle, to perish miserably in the dark. Hark ! above the voice of the wind, the tumult of the waves, he hears a dull reverberating sound, a heavy booming—the thunder of surf on a rock-bound shore ! He knew enough of geography to be aware that if they had run to sea in the night, and the wind had shifted a few points, their situation would be one of extreme danger. The long promontory of Lhyn, stretching out towards the Irish coast, formed one of the horns of a bay which was almost sure to be fatal to a ship once entrapped in its embraces. No skill, no seamanship, could weather that fatal point, if the wind were blowing strong ashore. In such a howling storm as this, escape would be impossible.

As long as he heard the tramp of men overhead, the hoarse cries of the officers of the ship, he had some sense of human companionship, felt not altogether lost and desperate. But when these sounds ceased altogether—when the motion of the vessel became easier—when he heard in a momentary lull the splash and beat of oars—when he realised that he had been abandoned to meet his fate alone, he became almost frenzied with fury,

and beat and hammered at the cabin door, tearing and clawing at it with impotent rage.

All of a sudden the door was opened, and an old weather-beaten sailor stood before him ; he made a gesture of astonishment, and then beckoning Gerard to follow, led him quickly to the main-deck.

The ship was flying rapidly before the wind, her helm firmly lashed ; half a mile on her leeward ran a dark line of rock-bound coast, visible every now and then in the driving mist. The rising curl of a wave disclosed some hundred yards away, a boat making for the shore.

‘ *Dim useyah !* ’ shouted the seaman, pointing to the boat. ‘ Stick to ship—much better, yes. Now come ; ship strike directly.’ As he spoke, with a dull grating sound, quivering in every timber, the ship touched the ground beneath her. Gerard and the seaman were thrown violently forward, whilst a great sheet of sparkling water, hanging over them for a moment, burst upon them with tremendous force. The old man clutched Gerard firmly with one hand ; with the other, he clung desperately to the rigging. The great wave passed over them, driving every sensation out of their bewildered frames as it wrapped them up in its biting waters and blinding foam ; but it passed at last ; once more they saw the sky above their heads ; the top-masts had all gone by the board, snapped clean off by the shock. The stump of the main-mast still stood firm beside them, and up the rigging they crawled, Gerard assisted by the sailor, and reached the cross-trees. Here, as long as the mast stood, they were somewhat out of the reach of the surf, and the seaman producing a cord, lashed himself and his companion securely to the rigging. Every now and then, a great curling wave would strike savagely out at them, covering them with a watery shroud. Every moment, as the vessel groaned and shifted under the impact of the furious sea, they expected the ship would break up, and their refuge be engulfed in the surf. The floating wreck and lumber, however, hanging about the ship, formed a kind of breakwater against the extreme force of the waves ; she held together bravely. Her poop-deck was carried away first, and the sea was strewn for a moment with planks and sails and all the fittings of the cabins ; still the main-deck held out firmly for a while. But the insidious, never-tiring sea found out a weak place at last ; plank after plank was washed away, and then the waves, in one grand assault of all their forces, stormed their way into the breach, and, with a mighty crash, the strong deck broke up into shattered, splintered fragments. The mast shook to and fro, but still it stood ; firmly stepped into the keel, it would stand to the very last ; but how soon that very last would be ! The old seaman folded his hands, closed his eyes in prayer ; when he looked up again, he cried with loud voice : ‘ Praised be God, the tide has turned ! ’

As though at some signal of recall, the sullen waves now began to retreat ; the highest of these could not reach them now. The sun broke out, feebly at first, and coldly through wracks and driving mists, but by-and-by, with cheering, grateful warmth ; and presently, the boiling, bubbling surf ebbed right away, and the yellow sands shone forth, wet and gleaming. Carts came down to the margin of the waters ; and when the wreck was seen by their drivers, they set up a shout, and presently

the beach was crowded with men and women, picking up all they could lay their hands on. Like so many ants, they seemed to the men clinging to the mast.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Another storm brewing; I hear it sing i' th' wind.

When the doctor first discovered that his notes were missing, he was pacified by the recollection that he had left them in his greatcoat pocket—a heavy coat with capes, which he only wore in driving or on horseback. But when he returned home, he found the greatcoat missing too. Then he remembered that he had worn it in the carriage, when he and Winny Rowlands went to look for the young Englishman. Yes; he had taken it off in the cave, when he had helped Owen to carry him out, and he had not returned to put it on; therefore, unless somebody had been there before him, there he would find his notes.

Unless! But perhaps somebody was there now, fingering his coat, opening his pocket-book, pocketing his notes. Horrible idea! How could he reach the place in the quickest and most secret way? Clearly, by walking, for there was a short cut over the hills for pedestrians, whilst the highway wound round the bases of the mountains, making a detour of many a weary mile; so he started on his way to the old Walls. When he reached the crest of the hill, and saw the rocky plateau and the Craigddu lying at his feet, he breathed a sigh of thankfulness: now the entrance to the cave was in view all the way, no one could enter or quit it without his seeing. But his satisfaction was short-lived, and his horror was great, when he saw, on the opposite slope, a black, moving spot, which he thought was the figure of a man—a spot which was moving to the same point as himself, and it had the start of him. It was at least two miles from the crest of the hill to the craig, whereas, from the opposite slope, the distance was not more than half a mile.

How he ran, and panted, and puffed, and how slowly he moved with it all! The black speck on the other side was nearing the treasure-hole much more quickly than he. He couldn't stop him. His legs were shaking, his calves were quivering like jelly, he panted, and gasped, and tried with his whole heart to put on a spurt, but the spurt would not come. At last, fairly spent and exhausted, he threw himself on the rocks, and groaned in despair.

The black figure was fast approaching the Craigddu. Over above it, where rose the steep peaks of the eastern pass, great masses of clouds were pouring down into the valley, hardly so much borne by the wind, as carried back towards the sea by some mysterious swaying of the air—some tidal pulse of the ethereal ocean; and as they wreathed and writhed, and rolled about the mountain's base, they gathered in more thickly over the black craig, till it seemed as though a cavern of the heavens had been there formed in the skies, the portals of which shone like brass in the declining beams of the sun, whilst its recesses loomed dark as the darkest pits of Acheron. Thin filmy clouds sprung into being in each terrace of the hills, and all among the rocks there rose a sound, which was hardly so much a whisper of the wind as a sigh of the earth; a farewell to the sun by the rocks, who had been warmed in his beams.

But taller still and more majestic loomed the figure now fast approaching the Craigddu; so

majestically he strode along, this tall black figure, dragging behind what seemed to the heated imagination of the doctor very like a long tail, that he involuntarily shuddered and shivered, and almost forgot the fate of his pocket-book in the superstitious terror caused by the sight of this mysterious visitant.

At last the figure disappeared in the shadow of the Craigddu, and seemed to make that very shadow blacker. And then the doctor remembered his pocket-book, and rose and tottered forward. Perhaps, after all, the figure might not visit the cavern; perhaps it might emerge on the hither side. He strained his eyes; the figure was no more visible; no doubt it had disappeared in the chasm.

'Diaoul!' said the doctor; 'perhaps, if he handles the notes, he'll burn 'em up to tinder.' The thought gave him fresh energy; he strode out once more manfully, and at last reached the Craigddu.

There was no living thing visible; but there, dark and mysterious, loomed the entrance to the cavern. The Hen Doctor seated himself on a stone near its entrance, and wiped his face tremulously; between fear and exhaustion, he was almost overpowered. What was this weird figure that had disappeared within the womb of the earth? On the one hand urged by the fear of the loss of his notes, on the other withheld by the superstitious terror that he felt, the Hen Doctor passed a few moments of anguish, and then plunged desperately into the cavern. All was dark and still. He knew where he had thrown his coat—in the corner to the left; he made for that at once. The corner was empty! 'Who are you who have taken my coat?' he cried fiercely, groping about in the dark, clutching at imaginary figures in the gloom. He stumbled at length, hit his foot against a projecting stone, and putting out his other foot to save himself, he found no support to sustain him, and so plumped into the little well.

The water was deadly cold, and the doctor's legs seemed to him to shrivel up to their sockets as he plunged feet foremost into the well; he clung to the sides with his hands, clutched desperately at the stones which surrounded it, raised himself even so as to get his elbows on the rocks; but no higher could he get; the slimy basin of the well afforded him not the slightest foothold, so that it seemed to him as though he had fallen into a chasm of ice, or fire, he hardly knew which, without sides, without bottom. He thought, indeed, he had discovered one of the entrances to the infernal regions.

'Diaoul!' he cried, 'I'm lost at last, body and soul. The Lord have mercy upon me! Oh, why didn't I say my prayers sooner?'

'Wretched man!' said a deep voice close to him, 'I have long passed you by, thinking you were too wicked to die.'

'Oh, mercy!' shouted the doctor; 'I will be wicked still, if you'll only let me live a little longer!'

'Will you spit upon your grandmother's grave?'

'Indeed, I will! Try me, good Cythraul!'

'Will you promise never to set a foot in a church or chapel, and never to give a penny to the offering?'

'That I will, gladly!' cried the doctor. 'Dim ceinioig! never, by the seven devils!'

'And you'll forswear your religion, and curse your country?'

'Religion! I never had any. Country! What has my country done for me, that I should go down to the pit for it?'

'And you shall give a hundred pounds for the disgrace of the church to the wickedest parson in Wales!'

'It will be Owen Gwyar of Pendyff that will get that! No; I'll be singed if I do! I'll sink for it first!'

'You stingy old blackguard!' said the voice again in its natural tones, that of Parson Owen—'get out of this! You choke the very pit with your sins! Ho, ho, ho! Put your foot down, you old reprobate; the well isn't three feet deep. You that would forswear the very grandmother that bore you! Ho, ho, ho!'

'Well, indeed, Owen,' said the doctor, scrambling out of the well, 'I did think you were the devil. But what have you done with my coat?'

CHAPTER XIX.

The isle is full of noises,
Sounds, and sweet airs.

Gerard fancied that he was once more on board ship, when he woke late in the afternoon, and found himself in a wooden bunk, an inclosure of polished oak. But he came to a knowledge of his real position when he sat up and looked around: he had been sleeping in a boarded recess in the wall of a cottage, in one of those stuffy, stifling, wainscot beds which used to be the pride and delight of the Welsh peasant. Opposite to him was a vast chimney, on the hearth of which smouldered a fire of peat; a great pot hung over the fire, and an old woman sat on a stool in the chimney-corner, singing to herself softly. There was a mantelshelf above the chimney opening, on which were ranged a row of candlesticks of polished brass; a long deal table stood against one wall of the room, and a wooden bench beside it.

'Well, mother,' he called to the old woman, 'how did I come here?'

'Indeed, how could you come but by the sea, my dear?' cried the old woman cheerfully, rising and coming towards her guest. 'Are you not on the blessed Island of the Saints? Didn't my son John Thomas bring you home from the wreck on the top of his cart—on the seaweed?'

'Ah! I remember now,' said Gerard; 'my head was confused at first. Then where am I? What do you call this place?'

'Ynys Enlli, my dear, is the name we give it; but you Saxons call it another name.'

'You speak English very nicely, mother,' said Gerard.

'Yes, my dear, and I ought. I was brought up in an English family before I married, and I always speak good English—yes, sure.'

'And what became of the rest of the crew?'

'My dear, we don't know. The boat didn't come ashore here; possible she made Port William, possible she lost herself. Dear, dear!'

'And how am I to get away?'

'Well, my dear, in a boat, when the wind doesn't blow very much; but now you can't get across—not whatever.'

'Can you give me something to eat?'

'There's plenty of sweet milk, and oat-cake, too, and I've got some brewis on the fire for you—I thought you'd like something comfortable.'

'Ah! that I should, mother. It's broth, is it? It's better than broth, *machgeni*; it's made of bread, my dear, good wheaten bread, that Ellis Owen baked a fortnight ago.'

Gerard couldn't help making a face over the mess the old woman brought him, which resembled a hot poultice, except that it had a fine flavour of peat about it. Nevertheless, to avoid hurting her feelings, he swallowed a little of it.

'Dear heart!' cried the woman, 'you can't eat. Ah! that's a bad sign, my dear; you're hurt in your inwards, my dear, I'm afraid. Try to eat a little more; do try now; it's so comforting.'

The daughter of the house came in as Gerard was being fed, a buxom, good-tempered-looking woman.

'Mother,' she cried, 'the sailors have just landed—the men from the ship who got away in the boat—they are coming up the street; and they are looking everywhere for the young Englishman who was taken off the wreck: he's the captain's nephew, it seems, and has run away from his work, and they were taking him back to Liverpool, to his master.'

'Poor dear,' cried the old woman; 'he doesn't look fit for work; indeed, no. Keep still, *machgeni*, and I'll manage them for you. You lie there like a mouse—see, I'll draw the curtain; they can't find you now.—What shall we say to them, Gwen?'

'Say that he's dead.'

'Indeed, that will do for them nicely. Here they come, *machgeni*; they found out who brought you, no doubt.'

'O captain, *bach*,' cried the old woman, as there entered the door of the cottage Captain Ellis and his mate, Brumfit—'O captain, *bach*,' she cried, wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron, 'to think the poor boy—just dead this minute—worn out with all he'd gone through. Ah, you're a cruel man, I'm afraid, captain, to treat the poor boy like that; and now he's just dead, captain; and I must have two half-crowns to lie upon his eyelids, captain; and you'll leave something for the burying of him; indeed, we must have the parson over from Pwllcrogen, and he won't move under a crown—no, indeed.'

'Was there nothing in his pockets?' cried the captain.

'Dim byd,' said the old woman, holding up her hands. 'Nothing in the world. Oh, for shame of you, captain, to treat the boy like that! Now, the half-crowns, if you please, yes.'

'Diaoul!' cried Captain Ellis. 'Here, old mother, *dau ceiniog*; plenty, two pennies; put them on his eyes, quite good 'nuff. And as for the buryin', let the parish look to it, Gwen Thomas.'

'Ah, but you're a hard-hearted man, and it will come back to you some day,' cried the old woman, screaming to him as the two men hurried away from the door, and hurling after him with contempt the pennies he had given her.

'Ha, ha, ha!' she cried as she came back into her cottage; 'didn't I send 'em off beautiful for you, *machgeni*?'

'What a jolly old woman you are!' said Gerard, looking at her with admiration from his box: he wondered at the promptitude and dexterity with which she had met the emergency, although he was half-vexed that he had consented to abet her deception. What could it matter indeed? He wasn't Captain Ellis's nephew, and the mistake would

have been cleared up if they had seen each other. 'How jolly you are, mother. It looks as if you were used to hiding up young chaps—eh, old girl?'

'Ha, ha!' laughed the old woman, 'when I was young; yes, indeed! Oh, the sport we had when I was young! The boys were much nicer then than they are now; yes, indeed.'

'Sing us a song, mother.' She looked so birdish and perky, he couldn't help asking her to sing.

The old lady put down her saucepan, set her arms akimbo, and in a somewhat weak and piping but still sweet and plaintive voice, began the old Welsh air, *Blodau'r gorllewin*.

As her voice faltered out the end of the stanza, another voice took up the strain; the door was wide open; and first one and then another of the villagers dropped into the room, till the bench by the table was crowded; and every one of them took his share in the song, which seemed to be ever beginning, never ending. Gerard rose in his box-bed, beating time to the air; and the old bard, who had come in too, and taken the cushioned chair by the fire, sat with his ancient gray face all ashake, and the tears standing in his rheumy eyes. After the *pennil*, they had hymns, which were very sweet too; and then the old bard recited a triad with great applause, and had a glass of whisky on the top of it. It was out of a little keg that had been picked up from the wreck; and when all the men had tasted of it, the keg was put away in the box-bed at Gerard's feet; after that, the singing went on faster and more furiously till far into the night; Gerard's last impressions being of a mist of human faces, of a perpetual chime of human voices, and of some one continually fetching out the little keg and putting it back again. If he didn't die of asphyxia, it was his strong constitution that saved him.

When he came to himself it was just dawn; two or three men were lying stretched on the floor, their heads in the ashes of the fire; an old cat was blinking and purring on the bench. The door opened, letting in a flood of cold, biting air and chill, dreary daylight: the old seaman who had saved Gerard from the wreck stood there looking in.

'Hollo!' cried Gerard; 'come in, old fellow.'

'There's a tug standing off on the south side of the island; they've sent a boat ashore for water; they are bound for Aberhirnant, with a ship they have picked up dismasted, and are lying by under the lee of the island till the weather moderates. Would you like to go off to her?'

'Yes, I should,' cried Gerard, springing up and hurrying on his clothes, which had been well dried at the fire the day before. 'I should have liked to have said good-bye to the old lady; but perhaps—'

'See her again,' said the old man—'see her again; there's no time to lose; come along.'

The old woman had wrapped up his arm and shoulder in damp seaweed, and the swelling and pain were now much lessened; indeed, he could touch the arm without its hurting him, and could dress himself easily enough. The sea was moderate under the lee of the island, although wild enough in the open. They got aboard the tug without difficulty, and were presently steaming along with a slapping good wind at their quarter, tugging away at a dismasted ship, which rolled to and fro heavily in the sea. But they were bound for Aberhirnant.

TO A FELLED TREE.

FINE giant! there you fallen lie,
Upon the ground you used to shade;
Sad havoc with thy beauty made;
No more thou branchest to the sky.

Royal poem of the sunny lane,
That used to feed mine eye and heart,
On thee has Fate performed her part,
Through Man, her instrument of pain.

Thy limbs are lopped; thy roots are torn;
Stripped off, thy time-withstanding bark;
A corner of my heart is dark,
I in the sunshine am forlorn;

Were I a woman, should shed tears,
To see thy glory brought so low;
No more to branch, no more to blow,
To green, with the recurring years:

The more, since Time's remorseless tooth
Has not unbared thy rugged tower,
But, in thine age's vigorous flower,
Thou fallest to my kind's unrruth:

And liest there, a slaughtered life,
Undated o'er the murmuring bars;
Who branched to half of many stars,
With all thy blood and blossom rife.

No more to drink the summer's rain;
No more to brave the winter's storm;
No more to rear thy lordly form,
And make the music of the lane.

No more to burst in April fringe;
To tassel-flower in copious May;
To deepen through the Summer day,
And mellow into Autumn's tinge.

No more to hear the linnet's note;
The gushing thrush, devoid of art;
To see the bright-billed blackbird dart,
The drunken butterfly past thee float.

No more to see the cowslip blow;
The violet about thy foot;
The pansy o'er thy mossy root;
The pebble-rippling runlet flow.

No more to overlook the grass;
Spring freshens to a living hue;
No more to drink the Autumn's dew;
To browse as Summer's snow-clouds pass:

To dapple, sweet, the daisied sod;
To hear the murmurous hum of bees;
To whisper with thy fellow trees;
To stand, a living text of God.

To sway beneath the boundless blue;
To greet the morn, in sunrise dress;
Or seas of sunset in the west;
The stars emerging into view.

Alas! alas!—but thanks for this—
They cut you down before the Spring;
Before the swallow's twinkling wing;
Before thine April's rose-sweet kiss.

Before your sap began to flow,
And while you slept in semi-death;
Before you caught the honeyed breath,
And saw, with tears, the primrose blow.